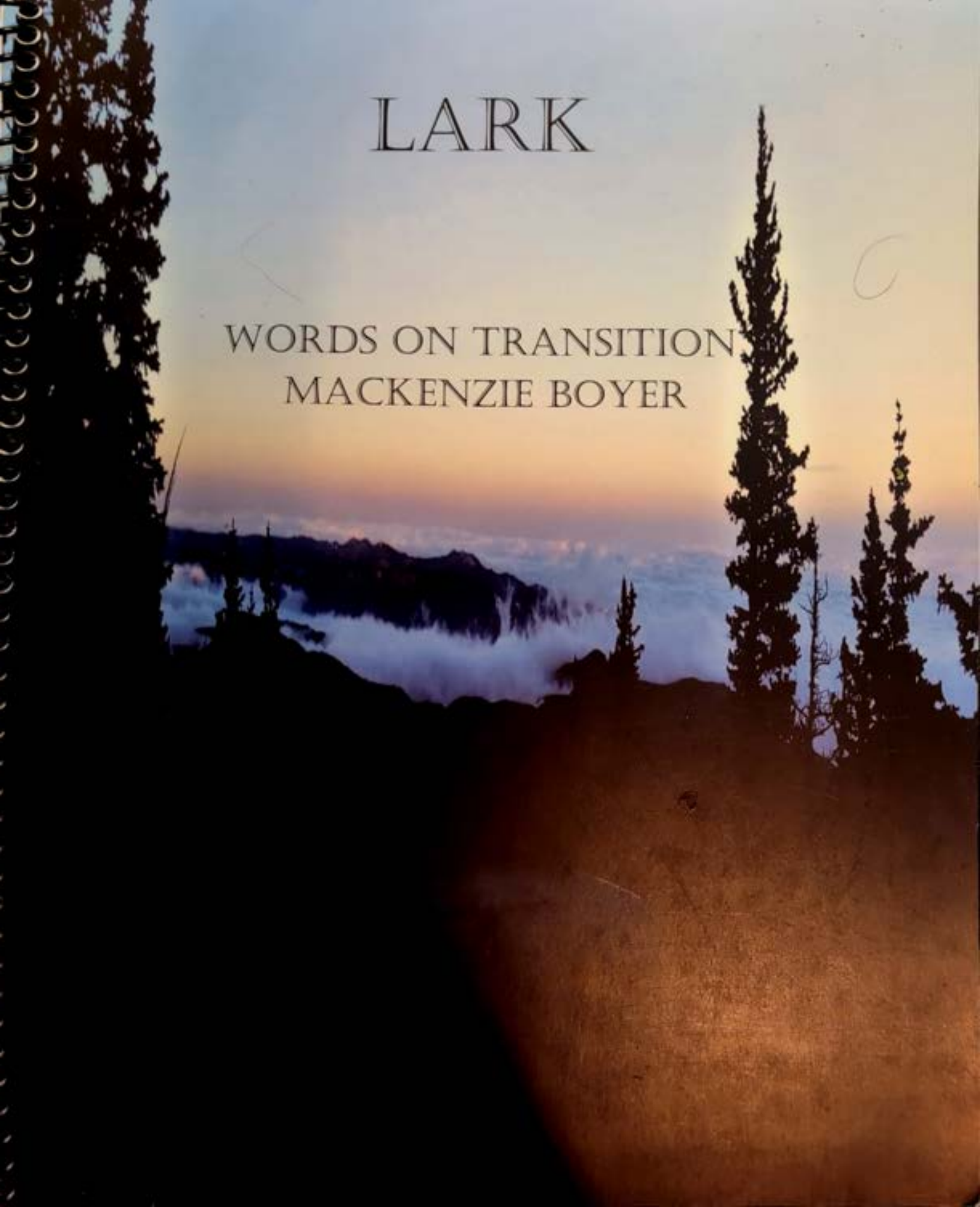
LARK
WORDS ON TRANSITION
MACKENZIE BOYER

For Anna, the beat of my heart

And also, for myself

With thanks to the Quaill Club, Planned Parenthood of the Rocky Mountains, Hear Here Poetry, Nico Wilkinson, Susan Peiffer, and my body.

The phrase 'sun machine' in My Next Project comes from Rubblebucket.

Photos taken on Tava: Cover: 6 miles up the cog track, dusk. Last page: Gabion at the summit. Back: 5 miles up the cog track, July thunderstorm.

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My next project:

Is a different kind of poem
My next project is a happy poem
My next project is repetitious
My next project is free
My next project is the discovery of my formlessness
My next project is impermanence
My next project is a song of myself
My next poem is a garden
My next project is watching things wilt
My next project is growing anyway
Beyond my heart
And out of my being
And out of my sobbing
My next project is being
Myself
Being something
My next project is human as a house
My next project is not looking so haunted these days
Is looking good
My next project is self love
My next project is lighting a candle
My next project is a sun machine
My next project is brushing my teeth
My next project is self injection
My next project is gender twice
My next project is good rest
My next project earned this rest
My next project is standing up way too late
And getting up anyways
Another day and another day
My next project is another day
Like each sunrise is a kept promise
My next project keeps promises

Pastel Femme

Halfway through the day
I apply lipstick
Alone in the women's room
Painting a melancholic archetype

I dip in the pool of my femme
splash in color
The bright blue vector of a life loudly lived
In women's days
I am a thousand floral instances
A tall glass of lilac wine

Pre-Op

My doctor asks me what my goals are
What I am looking for in my transition
Where I am going
I say I am looking for home
And I have forgotten the way and
There is no stopping to ask for directions
There is no one to ask but me
So I am here to make enigmas of my skin, of this esoteric guide to nowhere
Folding and unfolding until my own topography finally feels familiar

The doctor says I am home already and
Gender affirming surgery is just a change in the landscape
So I make cartography of the surgical application form
Bend my heart into the visceral bloom of compassion me
I am a delicate fucking flower and that finally feels familiar

The form asks me where I live and I think we are still talking about gender so I say that
where I live, if I listen soft enough, I can hear the auburn plains whisper to the algonglow
and sometimes, the lavender sunset
sings my name
the one I share
And my gender is built on this kind of tender miracle that does not fit on forms like how
the map is not the territory
the world does not sit neatly on a clipboard
I tell them
I am an ocean of a woman

The form asks about my past self harm and
I say I am ready for someone else to do the cutting
I say I filled the ravine with seashells
I say I once tried to kill the ocean when I lost my sense of tide
I once tried to run away from home and love my way back.
But I am learning to love this body
I am painting myself too big for an atlas
I am going home

She Her Hers

National pronouns day
Was yesterday
And
My pronouns are
Soft
Are
Regained learning
Are
hard fought
Are dangerous
Are so often mispronounced
I sometimes come spilling out of my mouth
Are always outing me
My pronouns are a metaphor
Can be metaphorous
Can be living will
Can be willing to tempt fate
My pronouns fit flatteringly
My pronouns win literary awards
My pronouns are the award
My pronouns are a gift I give myself
Every day
Is a day for my pronouns
My pronouns are political
Are a pink triangle
Are a crime against the state
Are the state
Are the city growing by the river in my chest
Are soft
Are a woman's
A delicate hair's
Are
Hers

Mackenzie Rosemary Lark

For first morning together, I leave my love to me my parents
She knows I'm going to a family function. Which is a family trying to function
Which is surviving each other
Which is surviving ourselves
And she knows every visceral pressure
Prickles with all the love I've been shedding
She knows I'm melting out here
She knows every misnomer commits its violence against the name I stake my skin on
So she tells me she will say my name
When I come home

Until I remember what beautiful feels like
Over and over and over
Music therapy
My name is a song
At home in her voice
And this is not the first time she says I love you
But it is the first time my name is not requium
It is the first time my name is
Love
In fact
It is what she
Is hanging on every note of
Her voice

The secret of naming yourself
Is
Knowing the cure
The symphonic miracle of when beautiful
Is the only thing you hear when she speaks
Is hanging on every note of her voice
Each breath an ode
To all the ways we have been enough
To still be here

Photo Credit: Anna Beninati